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## Cal-EPA Electronic Waste Forum November 25, 2002

### Local Government Panel Presentation Outline

**James Hemminger, P.E.**  
**Vice President for Regulatory Affairs**  
**Regional Council of Rural Counties**

#### WHAT IS THE CHANGING ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO WEEE UNDER THE EUROPEAN MODEL?

- ☐ Currently, local governments have broad statutory and legal obligations to manage all MSW
- ☐ AB 939 provide specific obligations to provide for HHW management programs
- ☐ Counties and cities responsible for monitoring/reporting HHW quantities
- ☐ Local government assumes liability as RP for HW pollution from landfills
- ☐ Citizens look to local government to provide cost-effective disposal for all HH wastes
- ☐ Local governments end up responsible for the consequences of illegal disposal
- ☐ Stewards of the land with local obligation to preserve quality of life

#### APPLICATION OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL MUST CONSIDER THE DYNAMICS OF CURRENT WEEE GENERATION IN RURAL CALIFORNIA

- ☐ Sharp increase in the use of “high tech” devices in rural areas
- ☐ Urban migration—home-based e-businesses and expectations of “urban service levels”
- ☐ Backlog of “legacy” WEEE
- ☐ On-line purchasing of computers/electronic devices
- ☐ The adverse impacts of imposed regulatory restrictions without adequate alternative disposal/recycling options

#### USING THE EUROPEAN MODEL, WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL WEEE PROGRAM?

- ☐ Need for cost-effective recycling/disposal fees at equipment’s “end-of-life”
- ☐ Reasonably convenient recycling/disposal options
- ☐ Informed public that knows “what not to do” and, more importantly, “what to do”
- ☐ Funding for program implementation, administration, monitoring, and reporting
- ☐ Reduced levels of toxicity and clarity about which “CED’s” are “hazardous”

## APPLICATION OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL WILL NEED TO CONSIDER SOME OF THE UNIQUE WEEE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN RURAL COUNTIES

- ☐ Low population densities mean high collection costs
- ☐ Long distances, limited access, and high transportation costs to recyclers/processors
- ☐ Limited economy of scale means higher unit costs
- ☐ Vast amounts of public land means that illegal disposal is difficult to control
- ☐ Lack of existing large scale electronic-based commercial outlets
- ☐ Financial limitations of rural local government and limited income residents
- ☐ High percentage of waste “self-haul”

## TO BE SUCCESSFUL, APPLICATION OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL MUST RECOGNIZE THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF RURAL WEEE PROGRAMS

- ☐ Much higher unit costs for collection, processing, transportation, and recycling
- ☐ “Inelastic” gate fees because of the problems with illegal disposal
- ☐ Parcel fee limitations due to Proposition 218 / mandatory collection programs infeasible
- ☐ Insufficient general fund revenues to “subsidize” waste programs

## WHAT’S NEEDED WHEN APPLYING THE EUROPEAN MODEL TO RURAL CALIFORNIA COUNTIES

- ☐ Extended infrastructure into all areas of California
- ☐ Effective public education and outreach targeting rural communities
- ☐ Financial support to offset costs to local government
- ☐ Regionalization and inter-jurisdictional cooperation
- ☐ Establishing an effective recycling network **prior** to the imposition of regulatory restrictions